

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the arrangement of this Specification in a manner similar to the arrangement of the parent application, now U.S. Patent No. 6,605,175. An Abstract is also provided. Deletion of reference to the unclaimed "H" in the Specification should obviate the drawing objection with the addition of "51a" to Fig. 1.

The rejection of Claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, paragraph 2 has been addressed in the above amendments to the claims.

Based upon the discussion at the interview as reflected in the Interview Summary, the rejection of Claims 23-29 and 31-34 as being anticipated by Ushikawa and of Claims 23 and 29-33 as being anticipated by Ramm et al, both under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), should now be deemed moot.

The rejection of Claims 24-28 and 34 as being unpatentable over Ramm et al. in view of Ushikawa and of Claim 34 as being unpatentable over Ushikawa in view of Ramm et al., both under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), are traversed. Reconsideration of each of these rejections is respectfully requested.

The type of vacuum chamber to which the present invention relates, to wit a stand-alone chamber in ambient, and the challenges it presents for improvement are different from the Ramm et al. chamber which was not intended to generate directly bondable surfaces which, prior to the present invention, would have been considered unthinkable given that those skilled in the art knew that bondability was severely deteriorated by exposing the workpieces to ambient. The Ramm et al chamber would thus have been an

“inline” chamber whose processed workpieces were discharged to a bonding station.

To this surprising ability to provide directly bondable surfaces, the chamber of the present invention substantially simplified the handling of workpieces by the use of a magazine accommodating workpieces in a plurality of slits to provide simultaneous treatment. Here again, one of ordinary skill would not have looked to the type of wafer boat scheme used in the reaction tube of Ushikawa because it was considered that the treatment effect on multiple workpieces would not be equally effective due to the “shadow” effect of one workpiece upon the others. Thus, any hypothetical combination of Ushikawa and Ramm et al. can only be viewed as being based upon impermissible hindsight reconstruction.

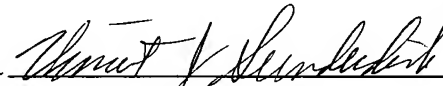
Accordingly, early and favorable action is requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 080310.47624D1).

Respectfully submitted,

February 25, 2005


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Attachments

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 1. This sheet replaces the original sheet. In Figure 1, previously omitted element 51a has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

